

GRIZZLY BIG SKY CONFERENCE
CHAMPION

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, in Montana, we are as proud of Montana as Texans are of being from Texas; we just aren't as loud about it. Until today.

I rise today to congratulate the University of Montana Grizzlies men's basketball team.

For my colleagues who didn't stay awake last night, Montana's own Grizzlies, led by tournament MVP Virgil Matthews, upset the top-seeded Northern Arizona Lumberjacks 73 to 60 to win the Big Sky Conference tournament and earn an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament.

This marks the second straight year that the Griz will join the "big dance" and could be the start of a dynasty for our very own Coach K.

In only his second year, Coach Larry Krystkowiak has led his teams to conference titles in both years, and this marks the first time that the Griz have had back-to-back NCAA tournament appearances since 1991-1992.

Coach K's achievements both on the court and off are phenomenal. As a player, he is the University of Montana's all-time leader in scoring and rebounding. He went on to a long and successful career in the NBA. He is a true Montana legend.

And then the legend came home to lead his alma mater. And all the victories have been great.

But the class and leadership of Coach K stands out much more. One example that sticks out in my mind happened just recently, when Coach K, along with several members of the Griz athletic department, all shaved their heads to both raise money for "Coaches vs. Cancer" and to show support for a friend who had recently been diagnosed with the disease.

I can't say that Coach K looked very good, but his actions set an example throughout our State.

Coach K is a class act, a great example of a dedicated Montanan, and I just wanted to take a moment to congratulate him and his team and wish them success with their upcoming March Madness.

(The remarks of Mr. BAUCUS pertaining to the introduction of S. 2398 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. BAUCUS. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURR). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ONLINE FREEDOM OF SPEECH ACT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, yesterday, I filed the Online Freedom of Speech

Act as an amendment to the lobbying reform bill.

This morning, the House Administration Committee will mark up identical legislation. We expect the House to act as early as next week to pass this vital protection of free speech.

Thomas Jefferson once quipped that, "Advertisements contain the only truths to be relied on in a newspaper."

But despite his low opinion of the press, he also observed that, "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

From the earliest days of our Republic, freedom of speech and freedom of the press—be they anonymous pamphlets, celebrated essays, or local newspapers—were understood to be fundamental to the practice and defense of liberty.

Without the ability to convey ideas, debate, dispute, and persuade, we may never have fought for and achieved our independence.

Ordinary citizens—farmers, ministers, local shop owners—published and circulated their views, often anonymously, to challenge the conventional order and call their fellow citizens to action.

Indeed, as Boston University journalism professor Chris Daly points out, "What we think of as reporting—the pursuit, on a full time basis of verifiable facts and verbatim quotations—was not a significant part of journalism in the time of Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine. . . . In historical terms, today's bloggers are much closer in spirit to the Revolutionary-era pamphleteers."

And today, it is bloggers whom we now have to protect.

There are some who, out of fear or shortsightedness, wish to restrict the ability of our modern-day Thomas Paines to express political views on the World Wide Web.

They seek to monitor and regulate political speech under the guise of "campaign finance reform." They argue that unfettered political expression on the Internet is dangerous, especially during the highly charged election season.

Needless to say, I stand firmly against these efforts to hamstring the Internet and squarely with the champions of free speech—whether that expression takes place in the actual or virtual town square.

Free speech is the core of our first amendment. And the Internet represents the most participatory form of mass speech in human history.

It is no accident that this technology was invented here in America. Freedom of speech is encoded in our DNA. It is what allows us to be uniquely curious, daring and innovative.

And it is no coincidence that Americans, steeped in the tradition of inquiry and rebellion, would give flight to yet another revolution on behalf of the principle we value most.

In an era where technology has made instant, unfiltered communication possible, I believe that the Congress has a fundamental responsibility to allow this new medium to flourish.

As an amateur blogger myself, and soon-to-be private citizen, I am committed to ensuring that the extraordinary explosion of political debate in the blogosphere is protected from meddling bureaucrats and regulators in Washington, DC.

I commented on this very issue on my own blog last week. Free political expression is not a narrow privilege but a fundamental right.

Back in April of 1999, when observers and commentators were only beginning to glimpse the rich potential of the Internet, Rick Levine, Christopher Locke, Doc Searls and David Weinberger posted the "Cluetrain Manifesto."

In it they said that, "A powerful global conversation has begun. Through the Internet, people are discovering and inventing new ways to share relevant knowledge with blinding speed."

Since then, the conversation has only grown.

While authoritarian regimes like Communist China struggle to control the information crossing their borders, millions of private citizens, typing away on their home computers, are engaged in millions of discreet and overlapping conversations, exchanging information, and circulating ideas.

As Americans, we should be on the side of this dazzling development. As citizens of the 21st century, we should recognize we have no power to stop it.

Brian Anderson of the Manhattan Institute points out that the Supreme Court has extended free speech to include nude dancing, online pornography, and cross burning.

It seems only reasonable that free speech should include the humble act of posting a blog.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE SMALL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today I rise to honor a man who has dedicated himself to serving our country and has made the sacrifices necessary to protecting our Nation's freedom during one of our most trying times.

Mr. George Small was born in Montreal, Canada, in 1908 and then moved with his family to New York City as a child. Upon graduating from the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn in 1935, he began to look for work. The country was deep in the throws of the Great Depression however, and there was none to be found. This sparked a move to California, where he found a job with a chemical plant near Death Valley. When the employees of the plant went on strike, George went on Active Duty in the Army; where he was already a 2nd lieutenant in the Army Reserves.

George's active service began on April 25, 1941, and he began training at the Army Chemical Warfare School. In